



BACK PACKS & HARD HATS



The Official CERT Team Member Newsletter

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C.E.R.T. Self-Study Group Session Reinforces Training

Steve Barden (Class #10)

A disaster strikes your neighborhood and communications are severed from local emergency responders. Everything is chaotic, with people hurting all around you and seemingly everyone crying out for assistance. You've been CERT trained, but it has been over a year ago. Would you remember what to do? What do you do first? Who do you treat first?

Thankfully, this is just a scenario, but it's a real possibility. In order to act and not freeze in this type of situation, CERT members need to be confident in their knowledge. But, the old adage, "if you don't use it, you lose it" comes into play. So for most CERT graduates, a refresher course is needed to strengthen their training. This was the goal of the pilot Self-Study Group Session created by Cobb CERT members, David Litts and Carol Thompson and then adopted by the CERT Community Education Working Group.

According to Dan Connors, Community Education WG Chair, "this first class was filled within hours, showing a real desire for

this type of training." Two more classes were also filled quickly.

The classes were led by three qualified CERT members. David Litts, a retired paramedic/firefighter from Pennsylvania; Dr. Virginia Galvin, retired former Chief Resident in Emergency Medicine at Grady Hospital; and Dr. Diane Russo, Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine. Participants reviewed "Unit 3: Emergency Medical Operations Part 1," from the CERT SM-317 manual.

A brief overview on basic first aid and the "Three Killers – Airway, Bleeding and Shock" was provided, then the class was divided into small groups for hands-on practice.

The second half of the class included a brief overview on triage and small group hands-on practice. Attendees were divided into wounded and non-

wounded groups, with the wounded given descriptions of their problem to act out. The non-wounded had to quickly triage the victims—Immediate, Delayed, or Morgue. The instructors verified correct decisions and explained incorrect choices.

According to class evaluations, attendees said the class increased confidence in their abilities. The class was intended to reinforce the original training and eliminate feelings of inadequacy.

CERT members are anxiously awaiting more self-study group sessions.



The Next Big Step for Community Preparedness

Gini Galvin (Class # 16)

With the Neighborhood CERT (NCERT) Operations Manual complete, the next big step for the Cobb CERT Community Preparedness Working Group is to facilitate the roll-out of the first group of NCERTs. Ten neighborhood leaders have emerged as "Champions" to offer their communities and themselves for this important effort. We congratulate each of these NCERT "Champions" for their initiative. You will be hearing more about each of their efforts as time passes.

After reviewing their initial applications and conducting interviews, Samuel Peng of Camden Pointe/Woodcliff Subdivisions was selected as the pilot. In the upcoming months, members of the Community Preparedness Working Group will function as mentors to support Samuel Peng and his efforts. The other candidates will begin a slightly less accelerated process involving community-building and using the NCERT Operations Manual as a roadmap.

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Do You Know?

Debbie Casteel (Class #8)

Everyone involved in the CERT program is lucky to have the opportunity to get to know know Anita Leming. This gracious lady is officially Administrative Specialist to Cobb EMA Deputy Director Lanita Lloyd. One of her "other duties as assigned" has been to assist with the CERT program and its volunteers.



Anita is a local girl, even though she was born in Camden, New Jersey. As she puts it, her mom and dad "came to their senses and moved back to Georgia" when she was four years old. Anita graduated from North Cobb High School in 1975 and married a week after graduation. She worked in several jobs, but to us, the one most important one happened in 1984.

A friend told her about an eight week assignment with the Cobb County Fire Department. At the end of that assignment she proved to be so valuable that she was hired for a part-time position. In November of that year she accepted a full-time position with the fire department, where she worked for the next 16 years. She accepted a position with the Cobb County Emergency Management Agency in September 2003.

Anita says the favorite part of her job is, "I get to

work with so many great people. The human spirit that shines forth after a disaster is amazing. Our CERT people were calling us to offer assistance during the 2005 hurricane season before we had a chance to ask for help."

Anita is always there when she is needed and always willing to go above and beyond the boundaries of her position to help fill any need. When asked what she wanted people to know about her, she said, "I am a survivor and I want those who are hurting to

know the weeping only lasts a short time, and that joy does come in the morning."

Could the EMA and the CERT program hope to find anyone better able to help us fulfill our role in the Cobb County community? I think that perfection is hard to beat!

Guiding CERT

Joan Mason (Class #14)

Jim Shuler, Key Communication Member/Citizen Corps Advisory Council

If "**Communication is Key**," then Jim Shuler is a **key member** of CERT's Citizen Corps Advisory Council. Shuler has been in the **Communications** business for more than 30 years. Shuler may be the most recognizable member of the Citizen Corps, as he was featured on local television, reporting news on three Atlanta stations for 18 years. If tragedy happens, this former criminal



justice reporter would be a **key** person to have on your team, and our CERT team is excited to have his talent and energy.

Shuler is currently Director of Public Affairs for the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) where he coordinates media and public awareness campaigns with familiar names like Click-it or Ticket, Operation Zero Tolerance, and the 100 Days of Summer HEAT. He recently staged a dramatic GOHS news conference at Six Flags in front of a 200-foot rollercoaster. "You wouldn't ride a 70-mile-an-hour rollercoaster without a safety belt," says Shuler. "Why would you drive that fast without buckling up?" Shuler has a reputation for combining crucial information with colorful venues with visuals that help reporters tell their stories and save lives.

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Before GOHS, Shuler was Public Affairs Officer for the Georgia State Patrol, where the Department of Public Safety received its first Emmy and Telly awards for a recruiting video and teen driving video he helped produce. Immediately after 9/11, Shuler was named Spokesman for Georgia's Homeland Security Task Force and for the newly created Office of Homeland Security. That's where he first learned about the Cobb County CERT program.

"I was really very excited when Lanita Lloyd first talked to me about Cobb County's CERT initiative," Shuler explained. "I should have known that Cobb would be on that leading edge. Progressive is the word. They don't wait until something major goes wrong, they forge ahead and ask the "what if" questions and then tackle the challenge with a lifesaving solution." Shuler credits Cobb County with a level of true professionalism. "CERT has provided me with another opportunity to apply what I learned at Georgia Homeland Security," he said.

His work and talent in the communications field brings much to the Citizen Corps. Shuler says he loves his profession because it has allowed him so many different ways to express himself. Looking back, he sees that each job along the way has been like a new piece of a communications career puzzle. The latest piece of that puzzle is Cobb County CERT where he has been busy collaborating on a CERT education production with the DPS video department. Who knows, maybe there is another Emmy winner on the way.

Whether tracking the trail of a criminal like Olympic Park bomber Eric Rudolph or following feature stories on the road for WSB-TV's Georgia Traveler, Shuler has been providing needed information to the public for more than a quarter of a century. During his TV news career he worked at television stations across the South but when he was hired in Atlanta, Shuler proudly proclaimed he would never move again. Jim Shuler lives with his wife and son in the house of their dreams overlooking the historic Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield Park.

How is a Neighborhood CERT Activated?

One of the most interesting questions the Community Preparedness WG has explored is, "How is a Neighborhood CERT (NCERT) activated?" When a disaster directly affects the neighborhood, the NCERT will **self-activate**. In this case the NCERT leader should make sure the incident has been reported to 911. Communicating with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) should be attempted to notify the Cobb Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) of the activation.

Unless the event requires a massive, multi-agency effort, the EOC might not be activated, but CEMA staff will respond to the call. NCERTs should function to the limits of their training and within their jurisdiction. If operating beyond their CERT training, members no longer function as CERT members but in their professional civilian capacities and as Good Samaritans.

All activations, other than a self-activation, will be approved and directed by the CEMA Director or his/her designee. Contact methods of NCERT activation include:

- Auto-Dialer (landline phone, cell, or direct-connect Nextel type phone)
- Text Message on Cell Phone/Blackberry
- Email
- Roving Vehicle with PA system
- Emergency Activation System ("This is not a test" announcement on commercial television, cable TV, and radio)
- Two-way Radio
- Amateur Radio Link

As more NCERTs are organized, activation drills will be an important part of NCERT preparation for future disasters.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Sixty-eight CERT members participated in the new **Self-Study Group Sessions** offered in May and June. Sessions were held on weekends and a weekday evening -- and in east, north, west and central Cobb. Kudos to Dave Litts, Gini Galvin and Diane Russo who put a lot of time and effort into the preparation and actual facilitation of the sessions, and to Carol Thompson who did a super job of managing the enrollment and selection of the sessions' dates and times to accommodate as many as possible. The Community Education WG is looking for additional CERT member volunteers to facilitate some of the upcoming new Self-Study Group Sessions. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Rozlynn Hamilton at Rozlynn.Hamilton@cobbcounty.org.



C.E.R.T. Bulletin Board is designed for our Cobb County CERT members to connect with other members online. The Community Education WG is currently surveying members' needs to develop forums on this

site. Come sign in and join the discussions about issues that interest you. You can exchange information and ideas with other CERT members anytime. If you need directions for joining the CERT Bulletin Board, contact Rozlynn Hamilton at Rozlynn.Hamilton@cobbcounty.org.

On June 6, about 40 CERT members participated in the **National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) Exercise** that took place at Dobbins Air Reserve Base (ARB). The NDMS was activated last year to evacuate medical patients from New Orleans into Dobbins ARB. CERT members worked check-in points, verifying identification for those approved to enter. All CERT members wore CERT vests as we role-played victims for the exercise. CERT members were invaluable, helping agencies to identify challenges for future improvement.

On June 16, CERT members Carol Thompson, Cari Edwards, Steve Walker, and Dan Connors assisted with the **Cobb County Emergency Simulation Full-Scale Exercise** at Dobbins ARB. First responders handled a simulated terrorist attack on the base. The goal was to enhance a response of multiple jurisdictions and agencies within Cobb County to a large-scale crisis. Over 60 agencies participated, and the EOC was activated. The exercise was a success with future challenges identified.



A **NEW CERT VIDEO** has been developed and will be shown on TV 23. The video educates first responders and our citizens on criteria to join CERT, the training that CERT members receive, how we are identified, what assistance we provide, and how we interact with Public Safety during a crisis or other events. There was a premiere showing for county and city officials with a packed house. Additionally, the Community Preparedness WG will use the video to help promote the NCERT program.

In the future, CERT members will be asked to assist with education on the **Pandemic Flu**. For more information about the bird flu, CERT members can check out <http://www.pandemicflu.gov>.



The **North Georgia State Fair** -- <http://www.northgeorgiastatefair.com> - is coming! This is one of the biggest outreach events in which we take part. The fair will run from Sept. 21 through Oct. 1 at Jim R. Miller Park in Marietta.

We have the opportunity to work together and inform Cobb residents about the CERT program. Carol Thompson will again be scheduling volunteers for the booth. You can contact her at (770) 565-3575 or by email at certthompson@comcast.net.

Cobb County CERT Class

Lost Mountain Baptist Church
5400 Old Dallas Road
Powder Springs, GA 30127
Room # – Common Ground D204

Day classes meet **Sept. 14, 21, 28, and Oct. 5** (Class meets each Thursday for four sessions) 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Evening classes will meet **Sept. 14, 19, 21, 26, 28, Oct. 3 and 5** (Class meets each Tuesday and Thursday for 7 sessions) 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) course is a 20-hour program that trains people to be better prepared for response to emergency situations in their communities. All participants must be at least 16 years old. If you are interested in attending this training, please contact Anita Leming to register for the program. You can contact her at (770) 499-4567 or by email at aleming@cobbcounty.org.